

In the Claims:

Amend the claims to read as follows. The attached "Version showing changes" shows each change made. No new matter is presented. The number of total claims has been decreased. The number of independent claims has been increased by one. The amended claims are within the number for which filing fees have already been paid. No fee is required.

1        1(amended). A cuvette control unit for controlling cuvettes by reading a first bar  
2        code affixed on said cuvette, said first bar code being comprised of at least one  
3        control code located on one of two opposite end portions of said first bar code,  
4        and at least one information code located between said opposite end portions,  
5        wherein said first bar code encodes a distinct value from among a plurality of  
6        possible values, said cuvette control unit comprising:

7              a first reading means capable of reading said first bar code, the first  
8        reading means being operative to read said first bar code and being responsive  
9        to at least two different values of at least one said control code at one of said  
10      end portions, wherein the first reading means distinguishes among said at least  
11      two different kinds when reading the first bar code;

12             a cuvette identification information producing means responsive to the  
13        first reading means, the information producing means providing a cuvette  
14        identification code based on the information code and also based on which of  
15        said different values of the at least one control code is read by the first reading  
16        means when reading said first bar code affixed to said cuvette; and

17             a memory means for storing cuvette identification information  
18        corresponding to said cuvette identification code.

1        2(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said  
2        cuvette identification information producing means produces said cuvette  
3        identification information from at least one said control code comprising a start  
4        code at one of said end portions, in combination with said information code.

1           3(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said  
2       cuvette identification information producing means produces said cuvette  
3       identification information from at least one said control code comprising a stop  
4       code at one of said end portions, in combination with said information code.

1           4(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said  
2       cuvette identification information producing means produces said cuvette  
3       identification information from two said control codes comprising a start code at  
4       one of said end portions, a stop code at an other of said end portions, and said  
5       information code.

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1           5(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said  
2       first bar code comprises a start code and a stop code, on opposite ends of two  
3       digits consisting of one character of information and one character of inspection  
4       code.

1           6(amended). A cuvette control unit for controlling cuvettes by reading a  
2       first bar code affixed on said cuvette and at least a second bar code affixed on  
3       a box for carrying a plurality of curettes, said first bar code being comprised of  
4       at least one control code located on one of two opposite end portions of said  
5       first bar code, and at least one information code located between said opposite  
6       end portions, wherein said first bar code encodes a distinct value from among a  
7       plurality of possible values, said cuvette control unit comprising:

8           a first reading means capable of reading said first bar code, the first  
9       reading means being operative to read said first bar code and being responsive  
10      to at least two different values of at least one said control code at one of said  
11      end portions, wherein the first reading means distinguishes among said at least  
12      two different kinds when reading the first bar code;

13            a cuvette identification information producing means responsive to the  
14        first reading means, the information producing means providing a cuvette  
15        identification code based on the information code and also based on which of  
16        said different values of the at least one control code is read by the first reading  
17        means when reading said first bar code affixed to said cuvette;

18            a second reading means capable of reading said second bar code, and a  
19        cuvette box identification information producing means providing a cuvette box  
20        identification code based on the second bar code;

21            a memory means for storing cuvette identification information  
22        corresponding to said cuvette identification code and said box identification  
23        code; and,

24            a storing control means for storing said cuvette identification information  
25        in the memory means, wherein the cuvette identification information is  
26        correlated in the memory to the cuvette identification code obtained from said  
27        information code combined with said at least one control code, and said cuvette  
28        box identification code.

Claim 7 is canceled, without prejudice.

Insert the following new claim:

1            8(new claim).        A method of controlling cuvettes by reading bar  
2        codes affixed on said cuvettes, the bar codes representing digits of code, said  
3        method comprising:

4            respectively locating a code to be used for detecting start/stop of said bar  
5        code at both ends of said bar code affixed on each said cuvette;

6            selecting and using at least one code from among a plurality of start/stop  
7        codes respectively showing different values, as at least one of the codes at the  
8        ends of said bar code, used for detecting start/stop of said bar code;

9               identifying each said cuvette using a cuvette identification code  
10          comprising one of the different values selected for said at least one of the codes  
11          used for detecting start/stop of said bar code and also comprising a value of a  
12          code located at a portion between said ends of said bar code;  
13          affixing to said cuvette the bar code showing the cuvette identification  
14          code; and,  
15          reading said cuvette identification code and producing cuvette  
16          identification information for controlling a plurality of the cuvettes.

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**CLAIMS**

**WE CLAIM:**

1. Cuvette 1(amended). A cuvette control unit for controlling cuvettes by reading a first bar code affixed on said cuvette, said first bar code being comprised of ~~codes for controlling at least one control code located on both~~one of two opposite end portions of said first bar code, and ~~code for at least one information code located between said codes for controlling~~opposite end portions, wherein said first bar code encodes a distinct value from among a plurality of possible values, said cuvette control unit comprising:

a first reading means capable of reading said first bar code; ~~, the first reading means being operative to read said first bar code and being responsive to at least two different values of at least one said control code at one of said end portions, wherein the first reading means distinguishes among said at least two different kinds when reading the first bar code;~~

a cuvette identification information producing means for responsive to the first reading means, the information producing means providing a cuvette identification code based on the information corresponding to said cuvette on which said first bar code is affixed from said code for controlling and said code for information of said first bar code read by said code and also based on which of said different values of the at least one control code is read by the first reading means when reading said first bar code affixed to said cuvette; and

a memory means for storing said cuvette identification information produced by said cuvette identification information producing means, corresponding to said cuvette on which said first bar identification code is affixed.

2.2(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said cuvette identification information producing means produces said cuvette identification information corresponding to said cuvette on which said first bar code is affixed from start code of said codes for controlling and said code for from at least one said control

code comprising a start code at one of said end portions, in combination with said information code.

3.3(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said cuvette identification information producing means produces said cuvette identification information corresponding to said cuvette on which said first bar code is affixed from stop code of said codes for controlling and said code for from at least one said control code comprising a stop code at one of said end portions, in combination with said information code.

4.4(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said cuvette identification information producing means produces said cuvette identification information corresponding to said cuvette on which said first bar code is affixed from from two said control codes comprising a start code at one of said codes for controlling and end portions, a stop code at an other of said codes for controlling end portions, and said code for information code.

5.5(amended). The cuvette control unit as set forth in claim 1, wherein said first bar code is comprised of said codes for controlling comprised of comprises a start code and a stop code, one digit of said code for on opposite ends of two digits consisting of one character of information and one digit character of code for inspection code.

6. The cuvette control unit as set forth in claims 1 through 5 for controlling a plurality of said cuvettes stored in a cuvette box on which a second bar code is affixed, wherein a second reading means capable of reading said second bar code is provided, a cuvette box identification information producing means for producing cuvette box identification information corresponding to said cuvette box, on which said second bar code is affixed, from said second bar code read by said second reading means is

~~provided, and a storing control means for storing said cuvette identification information corresponding to said cuvette stored in said cuvette box, on which said second bar code is affixed, read by said second reading means, produced by said cuvette identification information producing means, and said cuvette box identification information produced by said cuvette box identification information producing means, corresponding to each other in said memory means is provided.~~

7. Controlling method, comprising:

6(amended). A cuvette control unit for controlling cuvettes by reading a first bar code affixed on said cuvette and at least a second bar code affixed on a box for carrying a plurality of curettes, said first bar code being comprised of at least one control code located on one of two opposite end portions of said first bar code, and at least one information code located between said opposite end portions, wherein said first bar code encodes a distinct value from among a plurality of possible values, said cuvette control unit comprising:

a first reading means capable of reading said first bar code, the first reading means being operative to read said first bar code and being responsive to at least two different values of at least one said control code at one of said end portions, wherein the first reading means distinguishes among said at least two different kinds when reading the first bar code;

storing corresponding relation information between blood products information obtained by a third bar code affixed on a blood products storing means storing blood products and said cuvette identification information of said first bar code affixed on said cuvette obtained by said cuvette control unit as set forth in claims 1 through 6 in said memory means, when said blood products is processed using said cuvettes; and a cuvette identification information producing means responsive to the first reading means, the information producing means providing a cuvette identification code based on the information code and also based on which of said different values of the at least

one control code is read by the first reading means when reading said first bar code affixed to said cuvette;

controlling said blood products by said a second reading means capable of reading said second bar code, and a cuvette box identification information producing means providing a cuvette box identification code based on the second bar code;

a memory means for storing cuvette identification information corresponding to said cuvette identification code and said box identification code; and,

a storing control means for storing said cuvette identification information in the memory means, wherein the cuvette identification information is correlated in the memory means to the cuvette identification code obtained from said information code combined with said at least one control code, and said cuvette box identification code.

Claim 7 is canceled, without prejudice.

New claim 8 is added.

8(new claim). A method of controlling cuvettes by reading bar codes affixed on said cuvettes, the bar codes representing digits of code, said method comprising:

respectively locating a code to be used for detecting start/stop of said bar code at both ends of said bar code affixed on each said cuvette;

selecting and using at least one code from among a plurality of start/stop codes respectively showing different values, as at least one of the codes at the ends of said bar code, used for detecting start/stop of said bar code;

identifying each said cuvette using a cuvette identification code comprising one of the different values selected for said at least one of the codes used for detecting start/stop of said bar code and also comprising a value of a code located at a portion between said ends of said bar code;

affixing to said cuvette the bar code showing the cuvette identification code; and,